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T H E
SOLDIERS AND SAILORS
F R I E N D.

PRICE ONE SHILLING.



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THE
SOLDIERS AND SAILORS
F R I E N D.
AN
A P P E A L
TO THE
PEOPLE OF GREAT-BRITAIN.

BY
THOMAS MARTYN.

L O N D O N.
PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR, AND SOLD
BY MR. DEBRETT, PICCADILLY.

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FRIEND
AN
APPAL
TO THE
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BY
THOMAS MARTIN.



LONDON:
PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR
BY MR. DEBRET, PRINTER
IN CHIEF.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THIS little essay has been some time written, and the substance of it has been yet longer digested in the mind of the author; The plan has been approved by many persons to whom he has casually explained it in different conversation; How far their opinions may be sanctioned by the decision of the public he knows not; but, he thinks it his duty to submit the following pages to that decision. If the proposal which they contain

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should

should be adopted in practice : or, if any similar, but more unexceptionable scheme should be suggested by them ; he will rejoice, not as a successful writer, but in a superior character, as a man of humanity. At all events, he cannot dread the severity of criticism : from that he doubts not but he is secure in the motives which he professes, and by which alone, it is evident, he must be actuated in the present publication.

Great Marlborough-street,
March 9, 1786.



THE

dangers of war, for the honor of their
 sovereign, and the safety of their fellow
 citizens, they should be distinguished with
 our respect, completely worn out in the
SOLDIERS AND SAILORS FRIEND.

AMONGST the many lamentable
 effects of war, it is not the
 least affecting to humanity, that men
 are torn, or trepanned, from their dearest
 connections, and obliged to perform long
 and painful services ; to suffer cold,
 hunger, fatigue, and what to an English-
 man is still more distressing ; harsh treat-
 ment, inflicted by *the mistaken* rigours of
 military discipline, for slight offences,
 or *imputed crimes*.

But it is yet more cruel, and inhu-
 man, that, after submitting to such hard-
 ships, and readily encountering all the

dangers of war, for the honor of their sovereign, and the safety of their fellow citizens, they should be dismissed without regret, compleatly worn out in the discharge of their duty, infirm, and disabled, if not dismembered. If such important services cannot plead for a disbanded soldier, or sailor, the claims which these brave men have on such as have derived so great advantages from their patient toils, and dangerous enterprises, would be but little regarded, though they were supported by all the powers both of reasoning and eloquence.

Nor is relief only due to them on the most liberal principles, as a reward for their past merits ; it is consonant also to the soundest policy, as an encouragement to others, on any future emergency, to engage chearfully as volunteers by sea or land in the service of their country ;

country; that, if possible, government may no more lie under the painful necessity of recurring to the odious, and perhaps illegal measure of pressing, for the recruiting, either of our fleets or armies.

It must indeed be confessed, that among the many charitable institutions for which this nation is distinguished, a noble provision has been made, and is still continued by the patronage of Parliament, for that description of men, whose cause I have undertaken. The edifices of Chelsea, and Greenwich, justly gave rise to the observation of foreigners, "That our palaces look like hospitals; and our hospitals like palaces." Yet how inadequate are those foundations, great as they undoubtedly are, to the object which should ever be proposed in such a design; *I mean, to the universal relief of*
all

all who deserve it. Among the various applicants, the least of whom has a fair title perhaps to much more than he solicits; favour alone will necessarily direct the decision. It will be thought sufficient, if he who is admitted be worthy of that which he has obtained, though others, of equal, or probably of superior pretensions, may be excluded. To supply therefore the defects of these establishments. The author of this little pamphlet has devised a scheme which it is the business of these pages to explain.

The following then is the PLAN which I would propose for raising and applying a Sum equal to the maintenance of all Superannuated, as well as Disabled Soldiers, Mariners, and Seamen; first of the King's Ships, next of Privateers; and, lastly, even of Merchantmen.

PLAN

P L A N

OF A NATIONAL ASSESSMENT, FOR
THE REWARD OF NAVAL, AND MILI-
TARY MERIT.

AN act should be immediately passed
assessing all houses in Great Britain,
according to the following classification :

C L A S S I.

Houses rented at more than 4l. and
less than 10l. per annum, to be assessed
at the rate of 2s. per annum for each
individual coming within the meaning
of the act, residing therein.

C L A S S II.

Houses rented at 10l. and less than
20l. to be assessed at the rate of 3s. per
annum,

annum, for each individual, liable as
aforefaid.

P L A N

Class III.

Houses rented at 20l. and less than
30l. to be assessed at 4s. for each indi-
vidual, liable as aforefaid.

Class IV.

Houses rented at 30l. and less than
50l. to be assessed at 5s. per annum, for
each individual, liable as aforefaid.

Class V.

Houses rented at 50l. and less than
80l. to be assessed at 6s. per annum, for
each individual, liable as aforefaid.

Class II.

Class

CLASS VI.

Houses at 80l. and upwards to be assessed at 8s. per annum, for each individual, liable as aforesaid.

Minors, children under fourteen years old, servants of every denomination, and apprentices, to be exempted.

All yearly and quarterly lodgers in Houses of 30l. per annum, and upwards, to pay 4s. each per annum, with exceptions as aforesaid.

The assessments to be levied quarterly.

Penalty of 20l. on every master or mistress of a house, who shall not give in the true numbers of their families. The penalty to be recovered in a summary way before the Justice.

A similar

A similar act to be passed in Ireland,
and the same trustees appointed.

According to the above plan, those
persons in the 1st class living in houses
rented at more than 4l. and less than
10l. per annum, would pay but 6d. per
quarter, or a halfpenny a week.

Persons of the 2d. class rented at 10l.
and less than 20l. per annum, would
contribute only 9d. per quarter, or three
farthings per week.

Persons of the 3d. class renting houses
at 20l. and under 30l. per annum, would
pay 1s. per quarter, or one penny per
week.

Persons of the 4th class renting houses
at 30l. and under 50l. per annum,

would pay 1s. 3d. per quarter, or 1d. and a fraction per week.

Persons of the 5th class rented at 50l. and less than 80l. would pay 1s. 6d. per quarter, or nearly 1d. $\frac{1}{2}$ per week.

Those of the 6th class renting houses at 80l. and upwards, would pay 2s. per quarter, or about 2d. per week.

Yet, though the sum, which each individual would thus pay toward the general support of this scheme, is in itself so very inconsiderable, I have nevertheless good reason to think, that the whole money so raised in Great Britain would not be less than 200,000l. on the most moderate calculation; to which if we add about 20,000l. more, as the produce of a similar assessment in Ireland, there would be a sufficient fund to maintain

11,000

11,000 men, allowing each to enjoy an annuity of 20l. for life, from this charity. Now 11,000 men in addition to those who already are objects of the national bounty on different establishments, I presume to be as many as can reasonably be supposed to have a claim either on our justice or generosity. I doubt not however, if more should be found to apply, that the scheme proposed above would also prove on experience equal to the relief of many more than what I have stated: or, if indeed any deficiency should yet remain, the annuity may be reduced from 20l. to 15l. and would still afford to the aged, the wounded, and the infirm, such a little independency as would render their lives at least supportable, if not absolutely comfortable. It would also be proper to consider, how far it might be politic for the encouragement of the navy, to fix the

benefit

benefit which may be received by those who have served on board Privateers, or Merchantmen, at one half, or two thirds only of the pensions settled for such as have been volunteers in his Majesty's ships.

This scheme, if it were carried into execution (and I doubt not, that it would meet with a very general concurrence from the well known liberality of my countrymen), would be productive of many signal advantages to the community. One of the most immediately obvious, though not the most important, is, that it would spare men of feeling, as they pass the streets, the melancholy sight of so many diseased and mutilated wretches, who have extended the glory, or protected the commerce of their country: and it would take from the idle, that dress and character, which they too

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falsely

falsely assume, as the best calculated to interest in the most powerful manner the compassion of an Englishman. For since the great principle of my plan is, “ *Universal Relief to All who deserve it,*” it would at once remove all pretence for soliciting alms as a disbanded Soldier, or a disabled Sailor. For, if he who addressed himself to your benevolence should offer a false plea, the manner of his address alone would be sufficient to condemn him: and, if he were really what he asserted himself to be, he would not only be unworthy of your private bounty, but of the public munificence, which he would thus disgrace.

But the great purport of this plan is, not merely to give ease to the feelings of the humane, or even to do that justice which is most amply due to those who have spent their youth, sacrificed their health, or suffered dismemberment
in

in the service of their country : I am sanguine enough to imagine, that in time of war it would more than recompense the public for the sum so raised, by the inducement which it would hold out to volunteers ; for the certainty of a decent maintenance, in case of any accident, I am apt to think, would so operate on the minds of many as to preclude the necessity of pressing.

It may be said, indeed, that soldiers and sailors are not, in general, too solicitous about to-morrow : if an enemy heaves in sight, or comes marching out of his entrenchment to the attack, they stay not to reflect too nicely on the possible event *. They obey the orders

* Whether that day may be their last ; whether they may be sent to fight over their old campaigns at Chelsea, and Greenwich ; or, in Falstaff's phrase, " be for the town's end for life,"

of their Commander, because they love or because they fear him. One is brave because he is ashamed that his comrade should outdo him; and another, because he is emulous to outdo his comrade: this because nature has blest him with a total insensibility of danger; and that because he knows his danger to be more certain from the severity of military law. When the battle is over, they ejaculate two or three oaths of ludicrous pity for the dead; enquire what cheer with the wounded; get drunk in the joy of their own escape, if they can command liquor enough; and the next morning, in spite of qualms, and the head-ach, are ready to expose themselves to a repetition of the same perils.

This, it must be confessed, is a just description of the spirit, which, in general, actuates Soldiers and Sailors. Yet

it shews only, that Soldiers and Sailors are for the most part unthinking men; and perhaps, in the present state of things, unthinking men alone will be Soldiers and Sailors. But the sober, and industrious, I flatter myself, might not improbably be tempted by the prospect of advantages, such as the foregoing plan would present to their minds. Reason, as well as disposition, might then suggest it to men to engage chearfully in the service of their country, when they would be secure, if they survived, of a maintenance, much more ample than they could ever hope to obtain in any other mode by their personal labour; when, as disbanded Soldiers, and disabled Sailors, they would be certain of enjoying, with honour, from the nation at large, an affluence, which would at once be the envy and reproach of those who subsist disgracefully on the miserable pittance, grudgingly allowed by their fellow-parishioners.

To

To this scheme it would be one additional recommendation, that it affords an opportunity of engrafting on it, without compulsion, a *registry of our Seamen*. For it might hold out the rewards above proposed as directly or immediately resulting to those, who shall have been registered for any given number of years in any of his Majesty's ships; or for a longer period in any Privateer, or Merchantman.

And this, it is humbly presumed, would be a much stronger motive to induce a compliance with this useful measure, than an insignificant stipend annually paid, which has been frequently recommended with a similar intention. It would surely operate more forcibly on the mind, to ensure a competency in the event of wounds, infirmities, and old age, than

to offer immediately a trifle, of which as the loss would be but little felt, the possession would be as little desired.

These consequences, it is possible, may not so fully arise from the experiment of this proposal, as I at present promise myself. It must, however, be evident to all, that much good, will certainly be the result. And this is sufficient to make the trial an act of indispensable duty in our rulers; more especially, when the whole can be carried into execution at so inconsiderable an expence to individuals; an expence which I should be truly sorry to suppose, in any degree *equal to* the sum annually bestowed, in *Occasional Alms*, on that very description of supplicants who are here pointed out as proper Objects for this NATIONAL BENEVOLENCE.

Saturday,
March 18, 1786.

F I N I S.

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session would be as little desired.

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description of applicants who are here
pointed out as proper Objects for this
National Benevolence.



San Francisco
March 10, 1842

F I N I S